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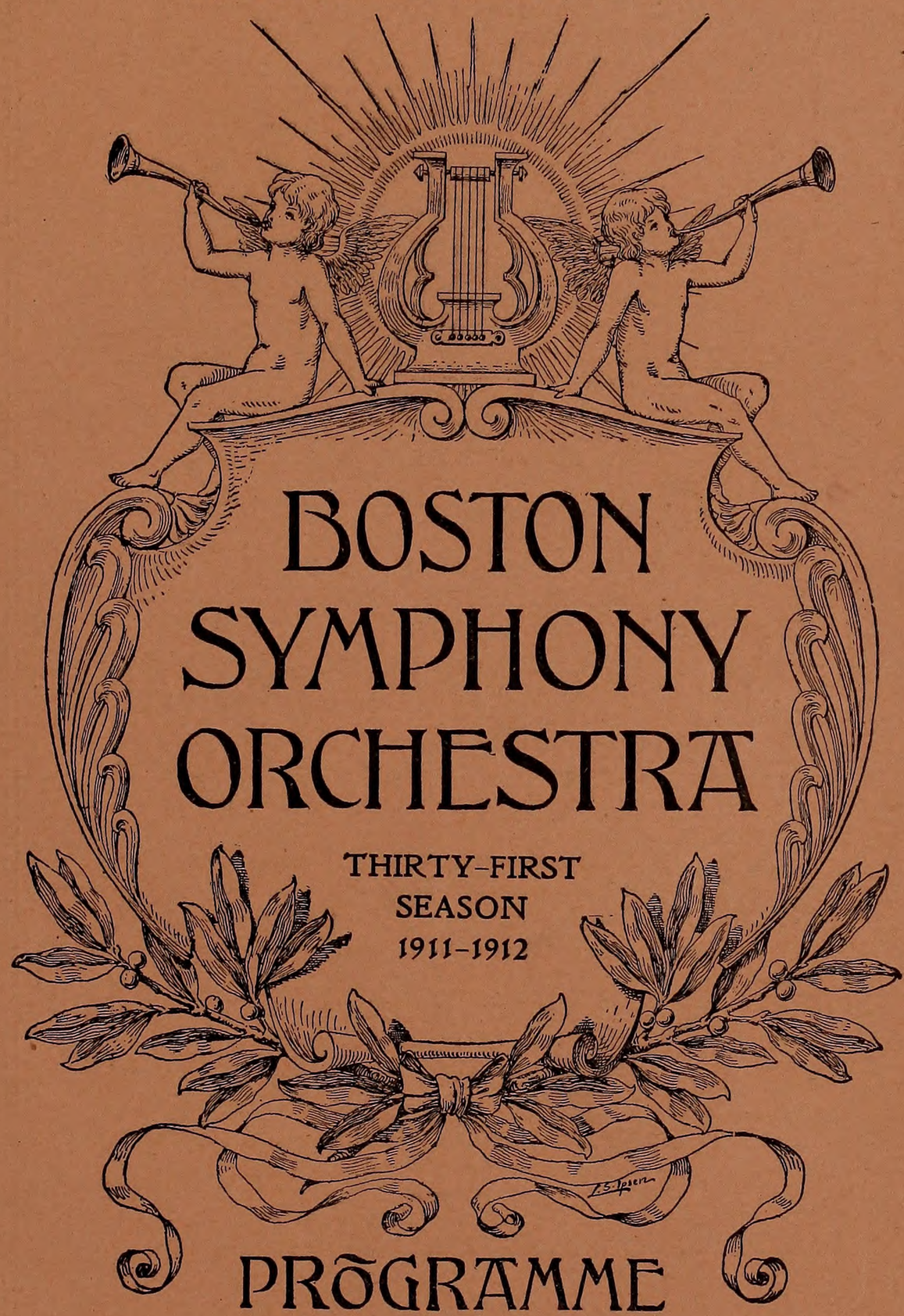

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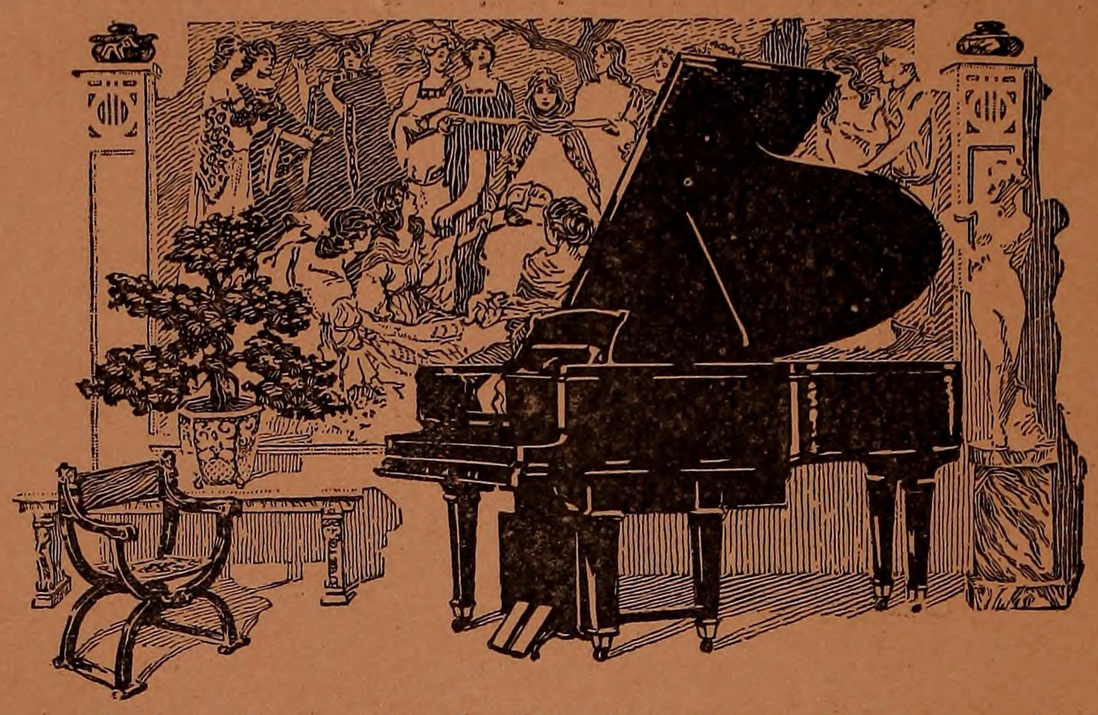

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Boston Symphony Orchestra

MAX FIEDLER, Conductor

Programme

WITH HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE NOTES BY PHILIP HALE

MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11

AT 8.00

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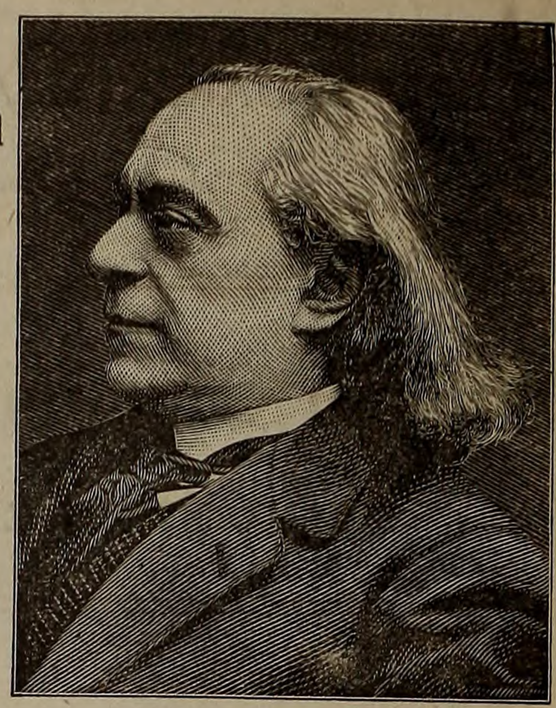

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Boston Symphony Orchestra

Thirty-first Season, 1911-1912

MAX FIEDLER, Conductor

MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11

AT 8.00

PROGRAMME

Weber . . . . . Overture to the Opera, "Der Freischütz"

Tschaikowsky . Symphony in B minor, No. 6, "Pathetic," Op. 74

I. Adagio; Allegro non troppo.
II. Allegro con grazia.
III. Allegro, molto vivace.
IV. Finale: Adagio lamentoso.

Bruch . . Fantasia on Scottish Airs, for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 46

I. Introduction: Grave.
Adagio cantabile.
II. Scherzo: Allegro.
III. Andante sostenuto.
IV. Finale: Allegro guerriero.

Debussy . . Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun" (after the Eclogue of Stéphane Mallarmé)

Sibelius . . . . "Finlandia," Symphonic Poem for Orchestra, Op. 26, No. 7

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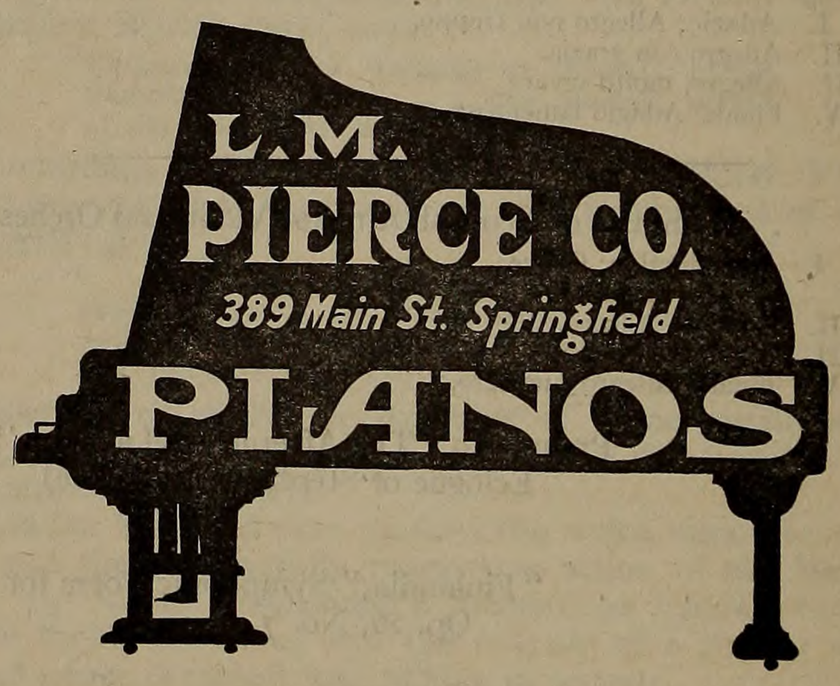

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OVERTURE, "DER FREISCHÜTZ" . . . . . CARL MARIA VON WEBER

(Born at Eutin, Oldenburg, December 18, 1786; died at London, June 5, 1826.)

"Der Freischütz," a romantic opera in three acts, book by Friedrich Kind, music by Weber, was first performed at Berlin, June 18, 1821. The cast was as follows: Agathe, Caroline Seidler; Aennchen, Johanna Eunike; Brautjungfer, Henriette Reinwald; Max, Heinrich Stümer; Ottaker, Gottlieb Rebenstein; Kuno, Carl Wauer; Caspar, Heinrich Blume; Eremit, Georg Gern; Kilian, August Wiedemann; Samiel, Hillebrand. It was the first opera performed in the new theatre, Schauspielhaus, erected by Schinkel in 1819–21, to replace the original building, which was burned down in 1817. Weber wrote in his diary that the opera was received with "incredible enthusiasm; Overture and Folk-song were encored; fourteen out of seventeen music-pieces were stormily applauded. Everything went exceedingly well, and was sung *con amore*. I was called before the curtain and took Mad. [*sic*] Seidler and Mlle. [*sic*] Eunike with me, as I could not get hold of the others. Verses and wreaths came flying. '*Soli Deo Gloria.*'" Some of these verses were malicious, and reflected on Spontini, much to Weber's distress.

Weber began work on the overture February 22, 1820; and May 13 he noted in his diary: "Overture of 'Die Jägersbraut' finished, and with it the whole opera. God be praised, and to Him alone be the glory." ("Die Jägersbraut" was the original title of the opera, and it was kept until into the year 1820, when Weber changed it to "Der Freischütz" at the advice of Count Bruhl, Intendant of the Berlin Court theatres.) Weber heard the music for the first time at a rehearsal of the Dresden orchestra, June 10, 1820, and this was the first music of the opera that he heard.

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The first public performance of the overture was at Copenhagen, October 8, 1820. Weber was making a tour through North Germany and Denmark. The second performance was at Brunswick, October 31, 1820. And, before the performance of the opera itself, the overture was played for the third time at Dresden, December 18, 1820, at a concert given by Weber's friend, Heinrich Joseph Bärmann, the brilliant clarinetist and the grandfather of Mr. Carl Baermann, of Boston. The performance at Brunswick inspired a favorable review published in the leading music journal of Leipsic. The overture was therein described as "a most important work of art, which displays the fantasy and genius of a bold speaker of the prologue." Max von Weber tells us that his father's overture brought Bärmann money, but no glory; for the attention of the audience was fixed on the new work, and the virtuoso was applauded as by absent-minded hearers, although he blew in most artistic fashion. He also says that the themes of the overture were not readily grasped, that the novelty of the orchestration disconcerted the conservative and elderly of the audience, and that applause at the end was without heart on account of the surprise and perplexity of those who were well disposed toward the composer. F. W. Jähns, on the other hand, says the applause was so great that the overture was played the second time. And here it may be stated that Max von Weber speaks as though this performance were the first and does not mention those at Copenhagen and Brunswick. But see "Carl Maria von Weber in seinen Werken," by F. W. Jähns (Berlin, 1871, pp. 318, 319).

We have mentioned the success of this overture at Berlin, when it was played as the prelude to the opera and under Weber's direction, a success that dumfounded the followers of Spontini, and settled the future of German opera in the capital. And so, wherever the overture

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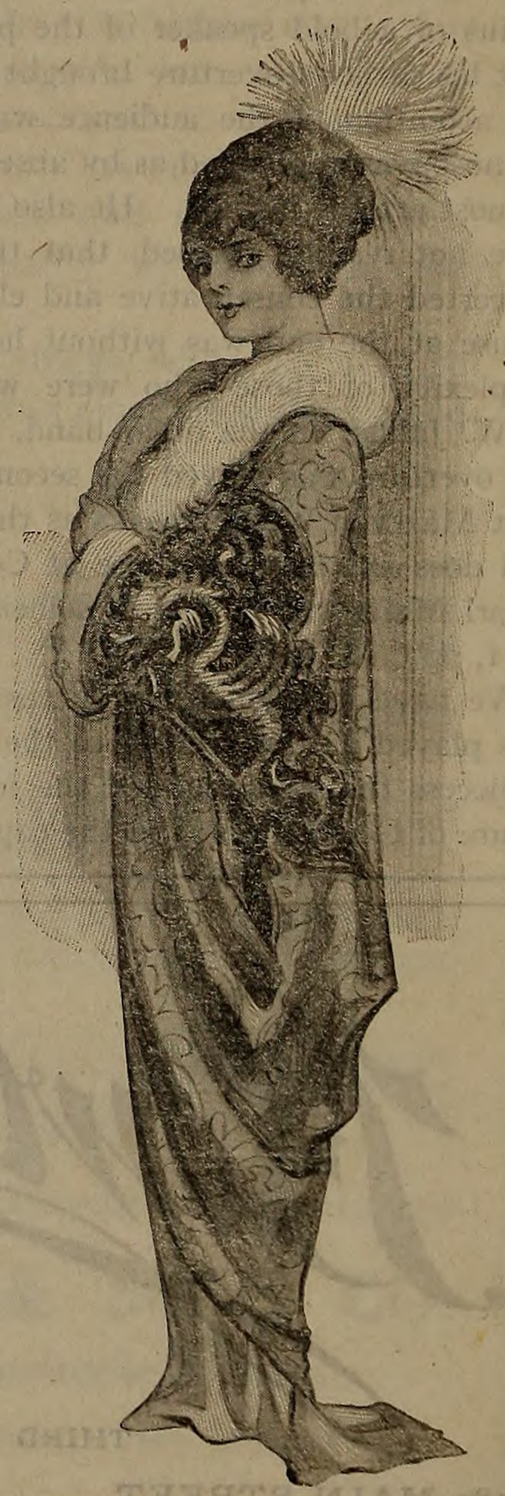

was played, the effect was overwhelming,—as in London, where the opera was first performed in English, July 22 (?), 1824, at the English opera-house. W. T. Parke wrote: "The music of this opera is such a continued display of science, taste, and melody as to justify any praises bestowed on it. The overture embraces most of the subjects of the airs in the opera, ingeniously interwoven with each other, and is quite original. The grandeur of some passages and the finely contrasted simplicity of others produced an effect which was irresistible. It was vehemently encored."

Two hundred and nineteen of the three hundred and forty-two measures of this overture are in the opera itself, and yet there is no thought of patchwork. As Mr. Mees has well said: "Weber's overture, far from being a kaleidoscopic series of tunes, is absolutely symmetrical in form, in that it comprises an exposition of the melodies utilized, a section in which they are worked out, and a climacteric coda."

Although the originality of the music is striking, Weber did not escape the charge of plagiarism; and this charge has been repeated by some who evidently did not take the trouble to investigate for themselves. Weber was accused of appropriating a theme from the piano concerto in D major, Op. 8, of J. L. Böhner (1787–1860), the singular being who was supposed to have sat to Hoffmann for his portrait of Johannes Kreisler. This theme was used by Weber, they say, in measures 12, 13, 14, of the Allegro of Agathe's grand aria, as well as at the beginning of the second, chief, and the last theme of the overture, the theme that also occurs at the end of the opera.

The arrangements of the overture are numberless, and some are curious. Moscheles made a version for three pianos, twelve hands, which was played in Paris, April 13, 1825, by Mendelssohn, Herz, Pixis, C. Pleyel, Schunke, and the arranger. There are arrangements for one, two, three, and four flutes; for flute, violin, and guitar; for flute and guitar; for violin and guitar; for two clarinets; for cornet.

***

The overture begins adagio, C major, 4-4. After eight measures of introduction there is a part-song for four horns. This section of the

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overture is not connected in any way with subsequent stage action. After the quartet the Samiel motive appears, and there is the thought of Max and his temptation. The main body of the overture is molto vivace, C minor, 2-2. The sinister music rises to a climax, which is repeated during the casting of the seventh bullet in the Wolf's Glen. In the next episode, E-flat major, themes associated with Max (clarinet) and Agathe (first violins and clarinet) appear. The climax of the first section reappears, now in major, and there is use of Agathe's theme. There is repetition of the demoniac music that introduces the allegro, and Samiel's motive dominates the modulation to the coda, C major, fortissimo, which is the apotheosis of Agathe.

It is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, kettledrums, and strings.

Mr. Apthorp wrote in his notes to a Programme Book (January 7, 1899): "I believe there is no other word in any other language that corresponds accurately to the German *Freischütz*. The literal English translation 'Free Marksman' does not in the least convey its meaning. The same may be said of the Italian '*Franco* arciero'—under which misleading title the opera was given at Covent Garden—and the French 'Franc archer.' Grove has it that the opera was given under this last title at the production under Berlioz in Paris; but Berlioz himself says nothing of this in the account of the production in question he gives in his Mémoires, and Wagner reports distinctly that it was then given as 'Le Freischütz.'*

"The word *Freischütz* (literally 'free marksman') means a *Schütz* or marksman, who uses *Freikugeln*—that is 'free bullets,' or charmed bullets which fly to the mark of themselves without depending upon the marksman's aim, and are therefore aptly termed 'free.'"

*This production, with music for the recitatives by Berlioz, was at the Théâtre de l'Opéra, Paris, June 7, 1841, and the opera was then entitled "Le Freyschutz" (see De Lajarte's "Bibliothèque Musicale du Théâtre de l'Opéra," vol. ii. p. 166, Paris, 1878). The absurd version of Castil-Blaze was first performed in Paris at the Odéon, December 7, 1824, and the opera was then entitled "Robin des Bois." The error in Grove's Dictionary, to which Mr. Apthorp refers, is retained, with many other errors, in the revised and enlarged edition edited by Mr. Fuller-Maitland.—Ed.

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Symphony No. 6, in B minor, "Pathetic," Op. 74.

Peter Tschaikowsky

(Born at Votkinsk, in the government of Viatka, Russia, May 7,* 1840; died at St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893.)

This symphony is in four movements:—

I. Adagio, B minor, 4-4.
Allegro non troppo, B minor, 4-4.
II. Allegro con grazia, D major, 5-4.
III. Allegro, molto vivace, G major, 4-4 (12-8).
IV. Finale: Adagio lamentoso, B minor, 3-4.

Tschaikowsky embarked at New York in May, 1891, for Hamburg. The steamer was the "Fürst Bismarck." His diary tells us that on his voyage he made sketches for a sixth symphony. (The Fifth was first performed in 1888.) The next mention of this work is in a letter dated at Vichy, June 30, 1892, and addressed to W. Naprawnik: "After you left me, I still remained at Klin about a month, and sketched two movements of a symphony. Here I do absolutely nothing; I have neither inclination nor time. Head and heart are empty, and my

* Mrs. Newmarch, in her translation into English of Modest Tschaikowsky's life of his brother, gives the date of Peter's birth April 28 (May 10). Juon gives the date April 25 (May 7). As there are typographical and other errors in Mrs. Newmarch's version, interesting and valuable as it is, I prefer the date given by Juon, Hugo Riemann, Iwan Knorr, and Heinrich Stümcke.

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mental faculties are concentrated wholly on my thoughts. I shall go home soon." He wrote his brother in July that he should finish this symphony in Klin. From Klin he wrote Serge Tanéïeff, the same month, that before his last journey he had sketched the first movement and the finale. "When I was away, I made no progress with it, and now there is no time." He was then working on the opera "Iolanthe" and the ballet "The Nut-cracker," performed for the first time at St. Petersburg, December 18,* 1892. He was reading the letters of Flaubert with the liveliest pleasure and admiration. In September he went to Vienna, and he visited Sophie Menter, the pianist, at her castle Itter in the Tyrol. He wrote from Klin in October: "I shall be in St. Petersburg the whole of November; I must devote December to the orchestration of my new symphony, which will be performed at St. Petersburg toward the end of January." But in December he travelled; he visited Berlin, Basle, Paris; and from Berlin he wrote to W. Davidoff (December 28):—

"To-day I gave myself up to weighty and important reflection. I examined carefully and objectively, as it were, my symphony, which fortunately is not yet scored and presented to the world. The impression was not a flattering one for me; that is to say, the symphony is

* Mrs. Newmarch, in her translation into English of Modest's life of his brother, gives December 17 as the date.

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Born in Johnstown, Pa., December 24, 1881, moved to Pittsburg 1884; musical education under Pittsburg teachers, Walker, Steiner, Oehmler, and Von Kunits, with advice and criticism from Emil Paur; became interested in the music of the American Indians and spent considerable time among them, securing material for use in composition and in a lecture recital, American Indian Music Talk; musical critic of *Pittsburg Dispatch*.

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only a work written by dint of sheer will on the part of the composer: it contains nothing that is interesting or sympathetic. It should be cast aside and forgotten. This determination on my part is admirable and irrevocable. Does it not consequently follow that I am generally dried up, exhausted? I have been thinking this over for three days. Perhaps there is still some subject that might awaken inspiration in me, but I do not dare to write any more absolute music,—that is, symphonic or chamber music. To live without work which would occupy all of one's time, thoughts, and strength,—that would be boresome. What shall I do? Hang composing upon a nail and forget it? The decision is most difficult. I think and think, and cannot make up my mind how to decide the matter. Anyway, the last three days were not gay. Otherwise I am very well."

On February 17, 1893, he wrote to his brother Modest from Klin: "Thank you heartily for your encouraging words concerning composition—we'll see! Meanwhile think over a libretto for me when you have time, something original and deeply emotional. Till then I shall for the sake of the money write little pieces and songs, then a new symphony, also an opera, and then I shall perhaps stop. The operatic subject must, however, move me profoundly. I have no special liking for 'The Merchant of Venice.'"

The symphony, then, was destroyed. The third pianoforte concerto, Op. 75, was based on the first movement of the rejected work; this concerto was played after the composer's death by Tanéïeff in St. Petersburg. Another work, posthumous, the Andante and Finale for pianoforte with orchestra, orchestrated by Tanéïeff and produced at St. Petersburg, February 20, 1896, was also based on the sketches for this symphony.

***

The Sixth Symphony was performed for the first time at St. Petersburg, October 28. The programme included an overture to an un-

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finished opera by Laroche, Tschaikowsky's B-flat minor Concerto for pianoforte, played by Miss Adele aus der Ohe, the dances from Mozart's "Idomeneo," and Liszt's Spanish Rhapsody for pianoforte. Tschaikowsky conducted. The symphony failed. "There was applause," says Modest, "and the composer was recalled, but with no more enthusiasm than on previous occasions. There was not the mighty overpowering impression made by the work when it was conducted by Naprawnik, November 18, 1893, and later, wherever it was played." The critics were decidedly cool.

***

The symphony is scored for three flutes (the third of which is interchangeable with piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one bass tuba, a set of three kettledrums, gong, and strings.

The first performance in Boston was at a Boston Symphony Orchestra concert, December 29, 1894. Other performances at these concerts were on January 11, 1896, February 15, 1896, April 3, 1897, February 5, 1898, October 29, 1898, January 11, 1902, December 23, 1904, March 16, 1907.

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Miss Kathleen Parlow, violinist, was born at Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in 1890. Her mother, born in New Brunswick, played the violin. Miss Parlow's parents moved to California when she was five years old. She studied in San Francisco with Mr. Conrad, of that city, for five years and for a similar period with Henry Holmes. Her first performance in public in San Francisco was at the age of six years.

In 1905 Miss Parlow went to London, and gave a recital on March 23, 1905. On November 1, 1905, she played with the London Symphony Orchestra, and in that year she was commanded to play before the queen. Feeling the need of further study, Miss Parlow took lessons of Leopold Auer for eighteen months. In the course of this period she played in public at Helsingfors and Riga. In July, 1907, she was chosen to play at the Russian concert conducted by Glazounoff at the International Musical Festival held at Ostend. In November, 1907, she began an extensive tour of Northern Europe. She has since that year led the life of a virtuoso.

Her first appearance in the United States since 1905 was on December 1, 1910, with the Russian Symphony Society, when she played Tschaikowsky's concerto.

She played in Boston at a concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, April 1, 1911 (Tschaikowsky's Concerto in D major).

Fantasia on Scottish Folk-melodies for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 46 . . . . . Max Bruch

(Born at Cologne, January 6, 1838; now living at Friedenau—Berlin.)

The full title of this composition is "Fantasia (Introduction, Adagio, Scherzo, Andante, Finale) for the Violin, with Orchestra and Harp, with the free use of Scottish Folk-melodies." The fantasia was played

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for the first time at Hamburg late in September, 1880, at a Bach Festival, by Pablo de Sarasate, to whom the work is dedicated.*

The composer wrote from Liverpool † to the *Signale* (Leipsic), No. 57, in October, 1880: "Joachim will play here on February 22, and he will play my new Scottish Fantasia, which, as I hear, has been badly handled by the sovereign press of Hamburg. This comedy is renewed with each of my works; yet it has not hindered 'Frithjof,' 'Odysseus,' 'Die Glocke,' and the two violin concertos in making their way. A work which is introduced by Sarasate and Joachim, a work by the same man who has given the two concertos to the violinists of the world, cannot be so wholly bad. We must allow the Germans the pleasure of depreciating at first and as much as possible the works of their good masters: it has always been so and it will always be so. But it is not amusing for the composer."

About the same time a friend of Sarasate wrote from Hamburg the following letter, which is passionate, though the emotion is curiously expressed: "I suppose you will receive an unfavorable account of Bruch's Fantasia, and I ground my opinion on the criticisms which have appeared here. I should like to state, therefore, that the public has by its behavior shown it thinks differently. The first musicians in Paris, as Lalo and Saint-Saëns, are full of admiration for the work, which has pleased all who have heard it. That Sarasate considers it good is a matter of course, otherwise he would do as he has done with five concertos dedicated to him this year—not play it. It ought to grieve us very much that a work of one of our most eminent masters should be run down off-hand by persons who have heard it only once,

* It is said that the Fantasia was played in May, 1880, by Joachim, at a private rehearsal in the hall of the Hochschule, Berlin, with the Hochschule orchestra led by Bruch. Joachim played the Fantasia at Liverpool, February 22, 1881, when Hallé's orchestra was led by Bruch.

† Bruch was appointed conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society in 1880, and made his home in England for three years.

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and, as it has not been published,* have had no opportunity of looking into the score; such conduct renders the task of the executive artist doubly difficult. Even if a musician thinks badly of this work, he cannot conscientiously give an opinion until he has, as he ought, rendered himself acquainted with it. Acting as they do, the critics here strike us, and all the musicians we know, as being superficial. Pray excuse me, for I mean well."

***

The fantasia is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, kettledrums, harp, solo, violin, strings; and bass tuba, bass drum, and cymbals are used in the Introduction and the first movement.

The Introduction opens, Grave, E-flat minor, 4-4, with solemn harmonies in brass, bassoons, harp; and the rhythm is marked by drum and cymbals. The solo violin has recitative-like phrases, accompanied at first by sustained harmonies in the strings, then by a return of the opening march-like motive in wind instruments. This preluding leads to the next movement.

Adagio cantabile, E-flat, 3-4. The Adagio opens pianissimo in full orchestra with muted strings. The solo violin enters and develops a cantabile melody.

The second movement, G major, 3-2, opens with preluding by the major orchestra, which leads from E-flat to G major. The solo violin enters with a scherzo theme, which the composer has characterized in the score as "Dance." The theme is developed now by solo instrument, now by orchestra with violin embroidery. A subsidiary theme of a brilliant character enters fortissimo as an orchestral tutti, and it is developed by the solo instrument. Recitatives for the solo violin lead to the next movement.

Andante sostenuto, A-flat major, 4-4. The song for solo violin is accompanied alternately by strings and by wood-wind and horns. The melody is sung by the first horn, then by oboe, then by horn and 'cellos, and at last by the flute, while the solo violin has passages of elaborate embroidery. A livelier theme is developed in B major by the solo violin. There is a return to the first theme in A-flat major, and there is further development.

The Finale, Allegro guerriero, E-flat, 4-4, opens with a march theme given out by the solo violin in full chords, accompanied by the harp

* The score was published in 1880.

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Good-night (High).
Laughing Song (High). Coloratura.

alone. The phrase is repeated by full orchestra. A second phrase is treated in like manner. There are brilliant developments of the theme, and a modulation to C major introduces a more cantabile second theme. These two motives are elaborately developed and worked out, at times by the solo violin, but for the most part by the orchestra against figuration in the solo instrument.

The Scottish melodies introduced, though greatly changed, are "Auld Robert Morris," "There was a Lad," "Who'll buy my Caller Herrin'," and "Scots wha hae."

Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun (after the Eclogue of Stéphane Mallarmé)" . . . . . Achille Claude Debussy

(Born at St. Germain (Seine and Oise), August 22, 1862; now living at Paris.)

"Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune (Églogue de S. Mallarmé)" * was played for the first time at a concert of the National Society of Music, Paris, December 23, 1894. The conductor was Gustave Doret. The second performance was at a Colonne Concert, Paris, October 20, 1895.

The first performance in Boston—it was also the first in the United States—was at a concert of the Boston Orchestral Club, Mr. Longy conductor, April 1, 1902.

* Stéphane Mallarmé was born at Paris in 1842; he died at Valvins in 1898. He taught English at French provincial towns and then for thirty years (1862–92) in Paris at a college. In 1874–75 he edited *La Dernière Mode*. The list of his works is as follows: "Le Corbeau" (translation into French prose of Poe's "Raven"), 1875; preface to Beckford's "Vathek," 1876; "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune," 1876; "Petite Philologie à l'Usage des Classes et du Monde: Les Mots Anglais," 1877; "Poésies Complètes" (photo-lithographed from the original manuscript), 1887; "Les Poèmes de Poe" (translation into French prose), 1888; "Le Ten o'Clock de M. Whistler," 1888; "Pages," 1891; "Les Miens: Villiers de l'Isle Adam," 1892; "Vers et Prose," 1892; "La Musique et les Lettres" (lectures delivered at Oxford and Cambridge), 1894; "Divagations," 1897; "Poésies," 1899.

At first a Parnassian, he became recognized as a chief of the Symbolists. For discussions of Mallarmé see Gosse's "Questions at Issue," 1893; Vittorio Pica's "Letteratura d' Eccezione," 1899; Arthur Symon's essay, "Mallarmé," in "The Symbolist Movement in Literature" (1899); George Moore's "Confessions of a Young Man"; Teodor de Wyzewa's "Nos Maîtres" (Paris, 1895); Paul Verlaine's "Les Poètes Maudits" (Paris, 1888); Gustave Kahn's "Symbolistes et Décadents" (Paris, 1902), an invaluable book to students of modern French poetry; Vance Thompson's "French Portraits" (1900).

In 1896 Mallarmé was named "poet of poets" at an election in which almost every Frenchman known in letters voted.

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Stéphane Mallarmé formulated his revolutionary ideas concerning style about 1875, when the *Parnasse Contemporain* rejected his first poem of true importance, "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune." The poem was published in 1876 as a quarto pamphlet, illustrated by Manet. The eclogue is to the vast majority cryptic. The poet's aim, as Mr. Edmund Gosse expresses it, was "to use words in such harmonious combinations as will suggest to the reader a mood or a condition which is not mentioned in the text, but is nevertheless paramount in the poet's mind at the moment of composition." Mallarmé, in a letter to Mr. Gosse, accepted with delight this understanding of his purpose: "I make music, and do not call by this name that which is drawn from the euphonic putting together of words,—this first requirement is taken for granted; but that which is beyond, on the other side, and produced magically by certain dispositions of speech and language, is then only a means of material communication with the reader, as are the keys of the pianoforte to a hearer."

Let us read Mr. Gosse's explanation of the poem that suggested music to Debussy: "It appears in the *florilège* which he has just published, and I have now read it again, as I have often read it before. To say that I understand it bit by bit, phrase by phrase, would be excessive. But, if I am asked whether this famous miracle of unintelligibility gives me pleasure, I answer, cordially, Yes. I even fancy that I obtain from it as definite and as solid an impression as M. Mallarmé desires to produce. This is what I read in it: A faun—a simple, sensuous, passionate being—wakens in the forest at daybreak and tries to recall his experience of the previous afternoon. Was he the fortunate recipient of an actual visit from nymphs, white and golden goddesses, divinely tender and indulgent? Or is the memory he seems to retain nothing but the shadow of a vision, no more substantial than the 'arid rain' of notes from his own flute? He cannot tell. Yet surely there was, surely there is, an animal whiteness among the brown reeds of the lake that shines out yonder? Were they, are they, swans? No! But Naiads plunging? Perhaps! Vaguer and vaguer grows the impression of this delicious experience. He would resign his woodland godship to retain it. A garden of lilies, golden-headed, white-stalked, behind the trellis of red roses? Ah! the effort is too great for his poor brain. Perhaps if he selects one lily from the garth of lilies, one benign and beneficent yielder of her cup to thirsty lips, the memory, the ever-receding memory, may be forced back. So, when he has glutted upon a bunch of grapes, he is wont to toss the empty skins into the air and blow them out in a visionary greediness. But no, the delicious hour

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grows vaguer; experience or dream, he will never know which it was. The sun is warm, the grasses yielding; and he curls himself up again, after worshipping the efficacious star of wine, that he may pursue the dubious ecstasy into the more hopeful boskages of sleep.

"This, then, is what I read in the so excessively obscure and unintelligible 'L'Après-Midi d'un Faune'; and, accompanied as it is with a perfect suavity of language and melody of rhythm, I know not what more a poem of eight pages could be expected to give. It supplies a simple and direct impression of physical beauty, of harmony, of color; it is exceedingly mellifluous, when once the ear understands that the poet, instead of being the slave of the Alexandrine, weaves his variations round it, like a musical composer."

***

"The Afternoon of a Faun" is scored for three flutes, two oboes, one English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two harps, small antique cymbals,* strings. It is dedicated to Raymond Bonheur.

The chief theme is announced by the flute, très modéré, E major, 9-8. Louis Laloy gives the reins to his fancy. "One is immediately transported into a better world; all that is leering and savage in the snub-nosed face of the faun disappears; desire still speaks, but there is a veil of tenderness and melancholy. The chord of the wood-wind, the distant call of the horns, the limpid flood of harp-tones, accentuate this impression. The call is louder, more urgent, but it almost immediately dies away, to let the flute sing again its song. And now the theme is developed: the oboe enters in, the clarinet has its say; a lively dialogue follows, and a clarinet phrase leads to a new theme which speaks of desire satisfied; or it expresses the rapture of mutual emotion rather than the ferocity of victory. The first theme returns, more languorous, and the croaking of muted horns darkens the horizon. The theme comes and goes, fresh chords unfold themselves; at last a solo 'cello joins itself to the flute; and then everything vanishes, as a mist that rises in the air and scatters itself in flakes."

* Small cymbals, as well as the large cymbals, were used habitually in the bands of the janizaries from the time of organization in the seventeenth century. The ancient ones found at Pompeii were of bronze, connected by a bronze chain of twenty-four rings. Mahillon says that the sound is pitched approximately to the first E above the treble staff. [F. A. Lampe thought it worth while to write a book of 429 pages. "De Cymbalis Veterum" (1703).] Berlioz speaks of them in his Treatise on Instrumentation: "I have seen some in the Pompeian Museum at Naples, which were no larger than a dollar. The sound of these is so high and so weak that it could hardly be distinguished without a complete silence of the other instruments. These cymbals served in ancient times to mark the rhythm of certain dances, as our modern castanets, doubtless. In the fairy-like scherzo of my 'Romeo and Juliet' symphony, I have employed two pairs of the dimension of the largest of the Pompeian cymbals; that is to say, rather less than the size of the hand, and tuned a fifth one with the other." (They were tuned to B-flat and F above the treble staff.) "To make them vibrate, well, the player should, instead of striking the cymbals full one against the other, strike them merely by one of their edges. They should be of at least three lines and a half in thickness." Chausson introduced antique cymbals in his symphonic poem, "Viviane," and Loeffler uses them in his "Pagan Poem."

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"FINLAND," SYMPHONIC POEM FOR ORCHESTRA, OP. 26, NO. 7.

JEAN SIBELIUS

(Born at Tavesthus, Finland, December 8, 1865; now living at Helsingfors.)

"Finlandia: Tondight för orkester," Op. 26, No. 7, was composed in 1894, some years before the loss of Finland's identity as a nation, yet it is said to be so national in sentiment, "and it evokes such popular enthusiasm in the composer's native land, that during the comparatively recent political conflict between Russia and Finland its performance is said to have been prohibited." It is not a fantasia on genuine folk-tunes. The composer is the authority for this statement. Mrs. Newmarch says: "Like Glinka, Sibelius avoids the crude material of the folksong; but like this great national poet, he is so penetrated by the spirit of his race that he can evolve a national melody calculated to deceive the elect. On this point the composer is emphatic. 'There is a mistaken impression among the press abroad,' he has assured me, 'that my themes are often folk melodies. So far I have never used a theme that was not of my own invention. Thus the thematic material of "Finlandia" and "En Saga" is entirely my own.'"

"Finlandia" was performed for the first time in America at a Metropolitan Opera House concert in New York, December 24, 1905. Mr. Arturo Vigna conducted. It was performed at concerts of the Russian Symphony Society, Mr. Modest Altschuler conductor, in Carnegie Hall, New York, December 30 and 31, 1905.

The first performance of this symphonic poem in Boston was by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Fiedler conductor, November 21, 1908.

The following note is from a programme of the Russian Symphony Society:—

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"'Finland,' though without explanatory sub-title, seems to set forth an impression of the national spirit and life. . . . The work records the impressions of an exile's return home after a long absence. An agitated, almost angry theme for the brass choir, short and trenchant, begins the introduction, Andante sostenuto (alla breve). This theme is answered by an organ-like response in the wood-wind, and then a prayerful passage for strings, as though to reveal the essential earnestness and reasonableness of the Finnish people, even under the stress of national sorrow. This leads to an allegro moderato episode, in which the restless opening theme is proclaimed by the strings against a very characteristic rhythmic figure, a succession of eight beats, the first strongly accented. . . . With a change to Allegro, the movement, looked at as an example of the sonata form, may be said to begin. A broad, cheerful theme by the strings, in A-flat, against the persistent rhythm in the brass, is followed by a second subject, introduced by the wood-wind and taken up by the strings, then by the 'cello and first violin. This is peaceful and elevated in character, and might be looked upon as prophetic of ultimate rest and happiness. The development of these musical ideas carries the tone poem to an eloquent conclusion."

"Finland" is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, bass tuba, kettledrums, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, and strings.

***

Sibelius at first studied the violin; but, as it was intended that he should be a lawyer after his schooling, he entered the University of Helsingfors in 1885. He soon abandoned the law for music. He studied at the Helsingfors Conservatory under Martin Wegelius, then with Albert Becker and Woldemar Bargiel at Berlin (1889–90) and with Fuchs and Goldmark at Vienna (1890–91). He then returned to Helsingfors. He received a stated sum from the government, so that he was able to compose without annoyance from the cares of this life that is so daily,—to paraphrase Jules Laforgue's line: "*Ah! que la Vie est quotidienne!*" *

* This stipend has been withdrawn, according to report.

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